

REMARKS

By the present amendment product claims 1, 3, 4 and 10 are under consideration in the application.

Support For Claim Amendments

Claim 1

The limitations of prior, now canceled, dependent claim 2 have been inserted into independent claim 1. The expression "+12/93Nb" appears in the equation added to claim 1. This is supported in the specification at page 11, lines 21-22 and line 26.

The last paragraph of claim 1 has been amended to conform claim 1 to the suggestion of the Advisory Action mailed July 13, 2009 at page 2, last paragraph.

As suggested by the Office Action mailed April 6, 2009 at page 2, paragraph 3, last line --when welded-- has been added to the last line of claim 1 to support the phrase "said hot-rolled welded steel sheet."

Claims 3 & 4

Dependent claims 3 and 4 have been amended to be dependent on only claim 1. Dependent claim 2 has been canceled by the present amendment.

Claim 10

The last 3 lines of dependent claim 10 have been amended in accordance with the suggestion of the Office Action mailed April 6, 2009 in the first 5 lines of page 3.

Amendments To The Specification

In response to the objection to the specification raised in the Advisory Action mailed July 13, 2009 at page 2, paragraph 2, the specification has been amended at page 21, line 3-4 and lines 11-13 to delete the phrase "so the softening degree of the heat affected zone (ΔH_v) was large" as it applied to comparative steel E and comparative steel J.

This deleted phrase has been replaced with --so sufficient burring (λ) could not be obtained--. This amendment is supported in Table 2, page 23 wherein burring (λ) for comparative steel E is 35 and wherein burring (λ) for comparative steel J is 51.

§112, ¶2

In the Office Action mailed April 6, 2009, claims 1 to 4 and 10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite.

In response to this rejection, claim 1 has been amended to insert the phrase --when welded-- at the end of claim 1 in accordance with the suggestion of the Office Action mailed April 6, 2009 at page 2, paragraph 3, last line.

With reference to dependent claim 10 and the Office Action mailed April 6, 2009, at page 2, paragraph 5, independent claim 1, from which dependent claim 10 depends, has been amended to recite Nb.

With reference to the Office Action mailed April 6, 2009, paragraph 6, bridging pages 2-3, the last 3 lines of claim 10 have been amended in accordance with the suggestion of the Office Action.

In view of the present amendment, it is respectfully requested that the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, be withdrawn.

§103

In the Office Action mailed April 6, 2009, claims 1, 3, 4 and 10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 (a) as being unpatentable over Japan No. 8-157957 (referred to in the Office Action as 408157957).

This rejection, as applied to the amended claims, is respectfully traversed.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Office Action mailed April 6, 2009 advised at page 4 that claim 2 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejection(s) under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, and to include all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

The Advisory Action mailed July 13, 2009, page 2, last paragraph, suggested to include the phrase --to form carbon clusters or precipitates with Mo and Cr-- in the last paragraph of claim 1.

Patentability

By the present amendment, claim 1 has been amended to include the limitations of dependent claim 2, with “-12/93Nb” changed to -- +12/93Nb -- are previously discussed.

Claim 1 has also been amended in accordance with the suggestion of the Advisory Action mailed July 13, 2009.

Claim 1 has also been amended in response to the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph.

It is therefore respectfully submitted that amended independent claim 1, and claims 3, 4 and 10 dependent thereon, are patentable.

Information Disclosure Statement

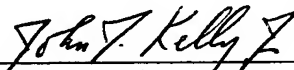
An Information Disclosure Statement accompanies this amendment and Request For Continued Examination (RCE).

CONCLUSION

It is submitted that in view of the present amendment and foregoing remarks, the application is now in condition for allowance. It is therefore respectfully requested that the application, as amended, be allowed and passed for issue.

Respectfully submitted,

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Dated: September 18, 2009

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